



**HOMEWOOD-FLOSSMOOR PARK DISTRICT**  
Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners

Goldberg Administration Center  
3301 Flossmoor Rd., Flossmoor, IL 60422

**Minutes of February 21, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners was called to order at 7:00 pm by Vice President Dennison. Commissioners Collins, Ojode and Dennison were present. Also present were Executive Director Debbie Kopas, Superintendent of Finance & Administration Karen Garrity, Superintendent of Parks & Planning Doug Boehm, Superintendent of Recreation Mike Gianatasio, Ice Arena Manager Lyndsay Freeman, Irons Oaks Manager Cheryl Vargo, Coyote Run Manager & Pro Tom Denklau, Marketing & PR Manager Bob Birgel, Human Resources Manager Kelly Rose, Racquet & Fitness Club Manager Michelle Artis, *H-F Chronicle* Reporter Marilyn Thomas, Secretary Anne Brabec and Visitor Maria Pasquinelli. Commissioners Bachus and Johnson were absent.

**CHANGE IN AGENDA** – Consent Item 4d, Personnel Policy 1.9 Anti-Nepotism, was moved to New Business Item 6c.

**COMMENTS FROM VISITORS** – Visitor Maria Pasquinelli commented that more visitors should attend the meetings because residents should know what is going on with their tax dollars. Also, she saw the *Chicago Tribune* article about Irons Oaks and commends them on it.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approval of Minutes - January 17, 2023
- b. Annual Staff Training Summary  
A report from the Human Resources Manager summarizing staff training programs for the calendar year 2022.
- c. Personnel Policy Updates  
A report from the Human Resources Manager recommending that the Board of Park Commissioners consider a motion to approve the Personnel Policy updates are presented.
- e. Ice Arena Change Orders  
A report from the Executive Director presenting approved Change Orders for Board information in accordance with the authority previously granted.

Commissioner Collins moved to approve the consent agenda as presented; minus Item d. Commissioner Ojode seconded the motion. Roll call vote with Ayes: Collins, Ojode and Dennison. Nays: none. Motion approved.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- a. RFC Premier Membership Fees  
Manager Artis indicated that after further analysis of the rates approved in January, and with the switch to the new registration system, the time was right to make a few additional fee adjustments effective April 1, 2023. The rates are still fair and continue to represent a great value for the facility and services offered.

Commissioners Collins and Dennison commented that they attended the RFC committee meeting when the fee adjustments were discussed and both were in agreement with them.

Commissioner Ojode moved to approve the H-F Racquet & Fitness Club premier membership fees as presented. Commissioner Collins seconded the motion. Roll call vote with Ayes: Collins, Ojode and Dennison. Nays: none. Motion approved.

b. Park District Advisory Committee

Superintendent Gianatasio reported on the efforts to rejuvenate the Park District Advisory Committee, including promotions on HFPD social media accounts and in weekly e-newsletters. Interest and participation in the committee has declined for years, and these efforts only generated two potential members, and the one interested returning member will be elected to the Board. With technology now providing many other methods of gaining feedback, it was recommended that PDAC is no longer viable.

As former PDAC members, Commissioners Collins and Dennison expressed that while they know much good has come out of the committee and they are sad to see it go, they agreed that the few people who expressed interest should be encouraged to volunteer in other capacities.

Commissioner Dennison moved to dissolve the Park District Advisory Committee and rescind applicable policies. Commissioner Ojode seconded the motion. Roll call vote with Ayes: Collins, Ojode and Dennison. Nays: none. Motion approved.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

a. Recreation Summer Fees & Charges

Superintendent Gianatasio reported that slight increases in camps fees are due to rising costs in staffing, supplies, busing, etc. and changes in swim lesson fees at Lions Club Pool will align them with those at RFC. New programming includes new VIP/Active Adult offerings, Improv classes, pool events and birthday party packages at Irwin Center.

Commissioner Collins commented it is great to see the expanded camp and swim lesson offerings and hopes they help limit waitlists this summer.

Commissioner Ojode moved to approve the Recreation Summer 2023 Fees & Charges as presented. Commissioner Collins seconded the motion. Roll call vote with Ayes: Collins, Ojode and Dennison. Nays: none. Motion approved.

b. Irons Oaks Camp Fees & Charges

Manager Vargo described two new nature camp options for this summer, one for teens and the other, "WE Nature Camp", for 2 – 4 year olds with their adult. Minimal fee increases will help offset rising costs in staffing and materials.

Commissioner Ojode commented that she appreciates that Irons Oaks is offering nature camp opportunities to such a wide variety of ages.

Commissioner Collins moved to approve the Irons Oaks camp fees and charges as presented. Commissioner Ojode seconded the motion. Roll call vote with Ayes: Collins, Ojode and Dennison. Nays: none. Motion approved.

c. Personnel Policy 1.9 Anti-Nepotism

Director Kopas reviewed that the anti-nepotism policy was temporarily waived the past two years because finding employees during that time was so challenging. It is believed that an overall waiver of the policy will not be necessary for this summer. There were, however, two excellent seasonal employees who are daughters of full-time employees whose supervisors would like to bring back.

With the reopening of the Ice Arena, new part-time skate guards are needed, and many applicants have not had the required skill level. Two who do that Manager Freeman would like to hire are the niece and nephew of a full-time employee.

None of these part-time employees would be working in a direct line of supervision with their relative, and the requested waiver for these four would remain in effect until they no longer would like to work for the park district.

Commissioner Dennison offered kudos to the relatives for raising such star employees.

Commissioner Ojode moved to approve a waiver of the Anti-Nepotism Policy for Kayla Denklaue, Ella Birgel, Katie Garrity and Jacob Garrity. Commissioner Collins seconded the motion. Roll call vote with Ayes: Collins, Ojode and Dennison. Nays: none. Motion approved.

#### **APPROVAL OF CLAIMS**

Commissioners had no comments or questions.

Commissioner Collins moved to approve the claims list in the amount of \$669,607.23. Commissioner Ojode seconded the motion. Roll call vote with Ayes: Collins, Ojode and Dennison. Nays: none. Motion approved.

#### **PRESENTATION AND COMMENTS ON FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDING January 31, 2023**

Commissioners had no comments or questions.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS – Board & Administrator – February 2023**

#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT AND COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Executive Director Kopas

- The Ice Arena reopened on February 12 with the Cupid Classic. Youth hockey players returned to the ice during this past week, Sunday was the first Open Skate, and there have already been four birthday parties.
- There is still work to be done at the Arena with the dehumidification and air conditioning systems yet to be installed, however sat with the construction management company and pared back the contingencies now that most change orders are complete. The contingency was reduced to \$50,000 and allowances left for work around the HVAC system to \$20,000. With those reductions, the project cost is now just under 6.8 million, instead of the over seven million projected. Thank you to all staff who helped keep costs down and made this long project come together.
- Marilyn Thomas indicated the Ice Arena will be featured in the March issue of the *H-F Chronicle*.
- The Marketing Department created a new logo to match the Arena's renovated interior, and there is a new sign above the front doors.

Commissioner Collins

- It's been heartwarming to see on the response to the Ice Arena reopening on social media.
- Thank you to everyone in the room who contributed.

Commissioner Dennison

- The Ice Arena social media campaign, including the great video featuring Jonni, has been great to see.
- Thank you to the Parks Department for spreading their manpower everywhere.
- It was interesting to read that if we hadn't purchased the outdoor rink liners, we wouldn't have had ice at all this winter.
- To the Smart Rec team, good to see it up and running and that the few expected kinks are being worked out.
- Wonderful to see the success of both old and new indoor winter events; thank you for always coming up with new ideas.
- Irons Oaks has gotten so much done this winter while getting ready for another busy summer.
- Kudos to Wiley's for their best January ever.

Commissioner Ojode

- Her kids and their friends enjoyed the outdoor ice rinks; it will be sad to have them gone and to not see the Parks staff working so hard on them when driving past.
- Great to see the low expenses and high revenue at the Racquet Club.
- Very nice that the course has already been open to golfers.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Collins moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 p.m. Commissioner Ojode seconded the motion. On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Debbie Kopas*

Debbie Kopas, Secretary